

**Department of Transformation and Shared Services**

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Secretary Joseph Wood

Director Kay Barnhill

February 23, 2023

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson
 The Honorable Jim Wooten, Co-Chairperson
 Uniform Personnel Classification and
 Compensation Plan Subcommittee
 Arkansas Legislative Council
 State Capitol Building, Room 315
 Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Senator Davis and Representative Wooten:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request from the Department of Human Services (DHS) for the addition of five (5) additional classifications for certification differentials within the Division of Provider and Quality Assurance (DPSQA). The requested differentials for continuation are listed below:

| Class Code | Title | Grade | Range | Employee No. |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| X067C | Health Facilities Surveyor | GS08 | | 8 |
| G099C | DHS Program Administrator | GS09 | | 1 |
| L027C | Registered Nurse Supervisor | MP02 | | 10 |
| L009C | Nurse Manager | MP03 | | 4 |
| L002C | Nursing Director | MP04 | | 1 |

DHS received approval for continuation of certification differentials in the table below.

The Honorable Breanne Davis, Co-Chairperson
The Honorable Jim Wooten, Co-Chairperson
February 23, 2023
Page 2.

| CERTIFICATION | CLASS CODE | TITLE | GRADE | PERCENTAGE |
|---|------------|---------------------------------|-------|------------|
| American Academy of Professional Coders: Medical Coding; American Academy of Professional Coders: Dental Billing & Coding | L038C | Registered Nurse | MP01 | 10% |
| | L070C | Health Care Analyst | GS05 | 10% |
| | G152C | DHS Program Manager | GS08 | 10% |
| | L027C | Registered Nurse Supervisor | MP02 | 10% |
| | G099C | DHS Program Administrator | GS09 | 10% |
| | C013C | Medical Services Representative | GS06 | 10% |
| | L009C | Nurse Manager | MP03 | 10% |
| Special Education, Institutional Specialty | E044C | Certified Bachelor's Teacher | GS06 | 10% |
| American Specialty Board | L008N | Physician Specialist | MP07 | 10% |
| | L005N | Psychiatric Specialist | MP08 | 10% |
| Long Term Care Facility Surveyor | L038C | Registered Nurse | MP01 | 10% |

These classifications are located within the Long-Term Care Unit and would only be provided after employees passed the Surveyor Minimum Qualifications Test (SMQT) and become certified to conduct nursing home surveys. This test requires each employee to complete the basic long-term care training course which includes nine (9) training modules prior to the four-hour test. Staff must pass the test with a minimum of 62% or they cannot become a federal surveyor. After passing and prior to surveying alone, all employees must participate in surveys with a preceptor to ensure knowledge and accuracy. DHS believes that due to the high demand for this training and the current inability to compensate for it in these classifications, employees will be more compelled to stay at the department and DHS will be more competitive.

At this time, DPSQA has fifty-four (54) positions that would potentially benefit from this differential. With the current twenty-three (23) filled positions in these classifications, the anticipated cost of this differential for the remainder of the fiscal year is \$206,180, including fringe, and no employee will receive more than the maximum of 10% allowed for the certification differential. DHS states the division has funding and appropriation for this unforeseen cost. After review of the requests, the Office of Personnel Management **recommends** the approval of the establishment of the abovementioned certification differential.



Office of Human Resources

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December 29, 2022

Kay Barnhill, State Personnel Director
Department of Finance and Administration
Office of Personnel Management
501 Woodlane, Suite 201
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

RE: Professional Certification – DPSQA

Ms. Barnhill:

The Department of Human Services, Division of Provider Services & Quality Assurance (DPSQA) is requesting additional classifications be added to an approved professional certification differential, up to ten percent (10%), for positions in the Office of Long Term Care Unit. This pay differential would be for those surveyors who have passed the Surveyor Minimum Qualifications Test (SMQT) and are SMQT certified to conduct nursing home surveys. The SMQT is part of the training and testing program for federal surveyors and addresses the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed to conduct standard and extended surveys in long-term care facilities. This certification is required by CMS, to be a federal surveyor, and involves employees completing the long-term care basic online training course which includes nine (9) training modules. The SMQT itself is a 1 day, 4-hour automated test which focuses on the survey process, related laws, regulations and guidelines, environmental quality, sanitation, resident assessment and care plans, facility records, medicine, nursing, rehabilitation, gerontology, disability, chronic disease, resident rights, quality of life, nutrition, pharmacy, infection control, scope, and severity. The test also focuses on skills in documenting, gathering, and integrating information. Staff must pass the test with a 62% or they cannot be a federal surveyor and survey nursing facilities. After passing the test, and before staff can survey alone, they must participate in surveys with a preceptor.

The demand for individuals who have completed this training has always been high. We have seen over the past year employees that have gone through the training only to quit within weeks of completing to join the private sector where they are compensated. By adding this differential, DPSQA will be more competitive in retaining individuals in these roles.

Currently, DPSQA has approximately fifty-four (54) positions in the unit. Approval has already been granted on the MP01 – RN position. We are requesting the addition of the below classifications that will benefit from completion of this training:

| Authorized Job | Authorized Grade | Authorized Title | Number of Positions |
|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| X067C | GS08 | Health Facilities Surveyor | 8 |
| G099C | GS09 | DHS Program Administrator | 1 |
| L027C | MP02 | Registered Nurse Supervisor | 10 |
| L009C | MP03 | Nurse Manger | 4 |
| L002C | MP04 | Nursing Director | 1 |

Based on the current twenty-three (23) filled positions in those classifications, at a max of a 10% differential, will be an estimated cost of \$206,180.28, including fringe, which has a 25% required state match. The division has the necessary funds for this cost. Should further information be required, please contact me at (501) 320-6250.

Sincerely



Damian Hicks
DHS Chief Human Resources Officer

Cc: Martina Smith